



CENTRAL
EUROPE

VICTORY



HEADQUARTERS 82D AIRBORNE DIVISION
Office of the Division Commander

LUDWIGSLUST, GERMANY
2 May 1945

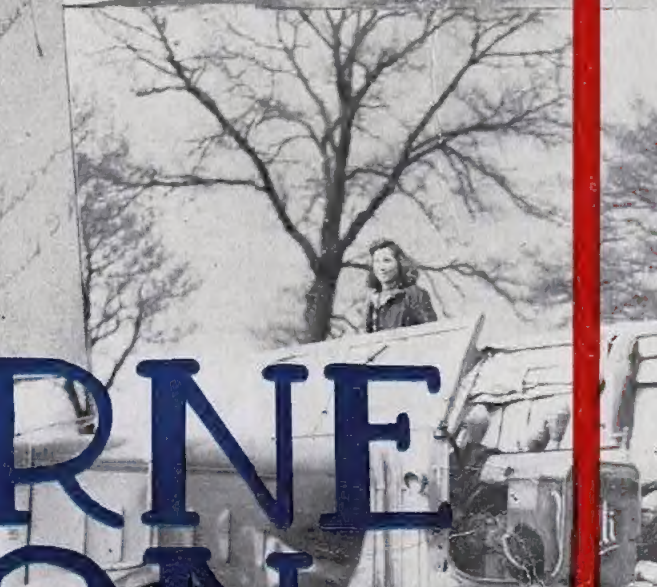
I, Lieutenant General von Tippelskirch, Commanding General of 21st German Army hereby unconditionally surrender the 21st German Army, and all of its attachments, and equipment and appurtenances thereto, to the Commanding General of the 82d Airborne Division, United States Army.

LUDWIGSLUST, DEUTSCHLAND
2. Mai 1945

Ich, General der Infanterie von Tippelskirch, kommandierender General der 21. deutschen Armee, übergebe hiermit bedingungslos die 21. deutsche Armee, und alle ihr unterstellten Einheiten, alle Geräte und deren Zubehör, an den kommandierenden General der 82. Fallschirmjäger Division, Vereinigte Staaten Armee.

Diese bedingungslose Kapitulation gilt nur für diejenigen Truppen der 21. Armee, welche die amerikanischen Linien von Tippelskirch General der Infanterie passieren.

W. Tippelskirch



82^d AIRBORNE
DIVISION

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82D AIRBORNE DIVISION
ACTION IN CENTRAL EUROPE
APRIL - MAY 1945

Based on Official After-Action Reports

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82D AIRBORNE DIVISION
ACTION IN CENTRAL EUROPE
APRIL - MAY 1945

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GSGS 4414, GERMANY, 1/25,000, Sheets 2630, 2730

GSGS 16, GERMANY, 1/100,000, Sheets R1, S1, S2, L5,
L6, M5, M6

National Geographic Society Map, "Germany and Its
Approaches", 1/1,500,000, dated July 1944.

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82D AIRBORNE DIVISION
ACTION IN CENTRAL EUROPE
APRIL - MAY 1945

PART ONE
ACTION ON THE RHINE

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NOTE: See Part Three for charts accompanying Part One.

SECTION I -- PREFACE

In late March, 1945, the 82d Airborne Division was engaged in training activities at its base camps at SISSONNE, SUIPPES and LAON, FRANCE. Reorganization under a new Table of Organization was under way and a schedule of intensive airborne training was being carried out. Experiments also were being conducted with new equipment, including the recoilless 57mm gun. Several tentative airborne missions were in the planning stage at Division Headquarters at SISSONNE.

Late in the afternoon of 30 March, the Division Commander, Major General James M. GAVIN was called to XVIII Corps (Airborne) headquarters at EPERNAY, FRANCE. Here he received instructions to the effect that the 82d and 101st Airborne Divisions were to concentrate Southwest of BONN, GERMANY. On 31 March the 82d Airborne Division was attached to the Fifteenth U. S. Army at 1400 and given the mission to patrol a section of the West bank of the RHINE River. This river was the western boundary of a huge "pocket" of GERMAN resistance in the RUHR area. Aside from patrols the Division probably would not cross the river. Movement of the Division to the new area would begin on or about 3 April.

SECTION II -- NARRATIVE1. Action on the Rhine

1. APRIL: The Division Commander, G-1, G-3 and a small group of staff officers and key enlisted men departed for the new Division area by plane during the day. General GAVIN reported first to the Commanding General, Fifteenth Army, and then to the Commanding General, XXII Corps. He also conferred with the Commanding General, 86th Infantry Division which the 82d Airborne Division was to relieve on the West bank of the RHINE River on or about the night of 4-5 April.

At base camps plans were completed for the movement of the Division which, it was learned during the day, would begin 2 April.

2 APRIL: Movement of the Division by rail and motor began at 0500. Eight trains left SISSONNE, SUIPPES and LAON between 0701 and 0807. Most of the motor echelons closed into new areas by 2400. Division Headquarters was established at WEIDEN, GERMANY, a few miles from COLOGNE.

3 APRIL: The process of closing into the new areas was handicapped by the fact only one train at a time could be unloaded at the railhead at STOLBERG, GERMANY, there being only one siding. However, before 2400 a majority of the units had closed and relief of the 86th Infantry Division had begun. 82d Airborne Division Field Order No. 19 was published giving details of effecting relief of the 86th in the sector from WORRINGEN, inclusive, eight miles North of COLOGNE, to GRAU-RHEINDORF, inclusive, 13 miles South of COLOGNE, a total river front of about 32 miles.

The 325th Glider Infantry began relieving 343d Infantry at 2000, with exception of 3d Battalion, 325th, which became Division reserve. The 504th Parachute Infantry began relieving the 342d Infantry at 2045, the 1st Battalion completing its relief at 2345 or less than 40 hours after it had entrained at LAON, FRANCE.

4 APRIL: The 82d Airborne Division officially relieved the 86th Infantry Division at 0829. The 325th Glider Infantry completed relief of 342d Infantry at 0159, the 504th Parachute Infantry completed relief of 343d Infantry at 0330, and 82d Airborne Division Artillery relieved 86th Infantry Division Artillery at 0400. The 341st Infantry, 86th Infantry Division, came under control of 82d Airborne Division from 0729 until 2330 when its relief by the 505th Parachute Infantry was completed.

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The Division improved defensive positions. Artillery fired a total of 478 rounds of harassing and interdiction fire.

Field Artillery dispositions, made under provisions of Field Order No. 19, were as follows: 319th Glider Field Artillery Battalion in general support, 320th Glider Field Artillery Battalion in direct support of 325th Glider Infantry, 376th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion in direct support of 504th Parachute Infantry, 456th Parachute Field Artillery Battalion in direct support of 505th Parachute Infantry.

A XXII Corps letter, dated 1 April, 1945, had directed that patrolling along the Corps front would be "intensified beginning night 2-3 April to the extent of not less than one patrol per front line battalion per night." Operations Instructions No. 2, 82d Airborne Division, added that "Within the discretion of the Regimental Commander, up to one rifle company may be left on the far bank of the RHINE River to screen, observe, and report on enemy activity."

5 APRIL: The Division continued to improve its defensive sector. Two patrols of 325th Glider Infantry and four patrols of 504th Parachute Infantry crossed the RHINE River during the night of 4-5 April and made contact with enemy troops. One prisoner was taken. Artillery fired 104 missions, 2,215 rounds.

6 APRIL: The Division continued actively patrolling and also improved its defensive sector. Three patrols, exclusive of a company-sized patrol of the 504th Parachute Infantry, captured two prisoners during the night of 5-6 April.

Company A, 504th Parachute Infantry, crossed the RHINE River during the night of 5-6 April and seized HITDORF (4273) as a base for further patrol action. Company A, 504th Parachute Infantry, was cited by the War Department as follows:

"Company 'A', 504th Parachute Infantry, is cited for outstanding performance of duty in armed conflict against the enemy in GERMANY on 6-7 April 1945. This Company crossed the RHINE RIVER at 0230 hours, 6 April 1945, and seized the mile-long town of HITDORF on the eastern shore, with the mission of providing a base for further patrolling, and to cause the German High Command to commit disproportionate forces against them in the belief that it was to be a major river crossing. The enemy immediately counter-attacked, but their assault groups were met with great vigor, and virtually destroyed to a man. Apparently under the impression that a strong American bridgehead had been established overnight, the Germans assembled and directed a considerable portion of two divisions to the mission of containing and annihilating this formidable thrust. In mid-afternoon the entire area was subjected to a withering and devastating artillery barrage for two hours, after which counter-attacking forces in overwhelming strength, with tanks in support, assaulted the defending troops from every direction and penetrated to the heart of the town. The troops of Company 'A' doggedly stood their ground, fought at close quarters and at point-blank range, and inflicted terrible casualties on the masses of the enemy. Fighting with relentless ferocity throughout the afternoon and night, this gallant company held its ground and carried out its mission until it was finally ordered (By XXII Corps) to withdraw to the west bank of the RHINE on the night of 6-7 April. Fighting was bitter and at close quarters. The German armor committed was destroyed with hand weapons, most of the troops using captured German panzerfausts. The Company fought its way back step by step during the hours of darkness to their boats. The courageous and skillful efforts of the Officers and men of this brave group, although outnumbered numerically at least eight to one, is reflected in the total number of casualties inflicted on the German forces during the day's fighting. Eighty prisoners were taken and evacuated, and conservative estimates indicate that 150 of the enemy were killed and 250 wounded. The conduct of Company 'A' reflects great credit on the Airborne Forces of the United States Army."

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Artillery fired 111 missions, 1919 rounds.

7 APRIL: While the Division continued its active defense, withdrawal of Company A, 504th Parachute Infantry, was completed during the night of 607 April. Two platoons of Company "I" assisted in covering the withdrawal. Casualties received by the company were: Six killed in action, 14 wounded or injured in action, 26 missing in action.

A patrol from 505th Parachute Infantry received 12 casualties when it became entangled in a minefield.

Artillery fired 128 missions, 2,357 rounds.

8 - 16 APRIL: No additional large patrols were sent across the RHINE River, due in part to strict rationing of artillery and mortar ammunition allotments, but the Division continued to improve its defenses and to send small patrols across the river until its positions were masked by the attack from the South by XVIII Corps (Airborne) on the East side of the RHINE River.

8 APRIL: Practice smoke screens were laid down along the river banks. Four successful patrols reconnoitered the East bank. Artillery fired 76 missions, 1,063 rounds.

9 APRIL: Despite adverse wind conditions, practice smoke screens were laid in sections of the Division area. Mortar and machine gun fire was placed on observed enemy positions. There were two patrols. The Division relieved the 761st Field Artillery Battalion of responsibility of guarding bridges on the LEFT Canal at 2300 hours. Artillery fired 57 missions, 704 rounds.

10 APRIL: The Division continued to maintain its defensive positions, sending one reconnaissance patrol to the East bank of the RHINE River. One practice smoke screen was laid. Artillery fired 91 missions, 1,543 rounds, part of the fire being at request of XVIII Corps (Airborne) Artillery on a reported location of the Command Post, German 3d Parachute Division.

11 APRIL: Aggressive defense of the West river bank was maintained, and four patrols crossed the river. Ten casualties resulted in a 329th Glider Infantry patrol when a hand grenade exploded in a boat. Artillery fired 68 missions, 1,055 rounds.

Operations Instructions No. 3 was issued in the nature of a warning order, listing areas in which units of the division would carry out occupational duties. The Division Military Police and Reconnaissance Platoons were instructed to begin a thorough search of rear areas.

12 APRIL: Liaison was maintained with the 15th Armored Division which was advancing to the North on the East side of the RHINE River. Surrender propaganda was broadcast to German troops. Military government was enforced in the Division area. Artillery fired 34 missions, 913 rounds.

13 APRIL: Active defense of the West bank of the RHINE River was maintained, and, in addition, 505th Parachute Infantry obtained letters of surrender from mayors of LULSDORF (4984), LANGEL (4850), NIEDERKASSEL (4846), and ZUNDRF (5153) on the East bank. Two reconnaissance patrols were sent across the river. Artillery fired 38 missions, 849 rounds. Artillery organic to the Division did not fire and other fire was in support of XVIII Corps (Airborne) advance.

Operations Instruction No. 4 (amended slightly on 16 April) was issued. It outlined occupational areas and plans for conducting thorough searches for caches of arms, ammunition, explosives and for enemy soldiers.

14 APRIL: The 325th Glider Infantry and 505th Parachute Infantry continued to outpost the river line but began assembling in Battalion areas. The 746th Field Artillery Battalion was relieved from the 417th Field Artillery Group, converted to Special Guards and attached to 82d Airborne Division. It assumed responsibility for guarding bridges over the ERFT Canal and Displaced Persons camps at 1800. Artillery fired 16 missions, 475 rounds.

15 APRIL: Patrol contact was established with the 97th Infantry Division on the East bank of the river. The 746th Field Artillery Battalion (Converted) collected organic units of the Division of responsibility for support of utilities installations in the Division zone. Artillery fired 24 missions, 572 rounds.

16 APRIL: Friendly troops advancing along the East bank of the RHEIN River asked the last of the 82d Airborne Division's positions during the day. The 504th Parachute Infantry was relieved of its mission of active defense of the West bank at 1800. The 417th Field Artillery Group fired six missions, 288 rounds, at request of the 13th Armored Division, before being relieved from attachment to the 82d Airborne Division at 1200 hours.

17 APRIL: Reallocation of troops within the Division area was made in order to secure and enforce military government in the sector. Preparations were made to carry out provisions of 82d Airborne Division Operations Instructions No. 4.

2. Military Government in COLOGNE, GERMANY Area

From 18 April until the relief 25 April, the 82d Airborne Division carried on occupational duties in the COLOGNE, GERMANY Area. A thorough search was made of the area by sectors to locate prisoners of war and caches of arms, ammunition and explosives. Guards and administrative personnel were provided for Displaced Persons Camps. Bridges and ammunition dumps were guarded and minefields were located and marked.

Operations Instructions No. 8 were published 18 April amplifying duties of organic and attached units. As amended under date of 23 April, these instructions provided that 80th Airborne Anti-Aircraft Battalion would first search its own area and then assist the 505th Parachute Infantry. The 316th and 320th Glider Field Artillery Battalions would search COLOGNE after completing work in their own area.

A temporary boundary was established for XXII and XXIII Corps pending the time XXIII Corps became operative. The 942d Field Artillery Battalion was assigned control of the area between the permanent and temporary corps' boundaries.

A total of 653 prisoners were taken during the search. Many of these had changed into civilian clothing.

SECTION III -- INTELLIGENCE

When the 82d Airborne Division moved into the COLOGNE, GERMANY area, the German 353d Infantry Division, having held a sector on the East bank of the RHEIN River between COLOGNE and BONN, was reported in the process of moving to the SOEST area Northeast of the RUHR area. Elements of the enemy 3d Parachute Division were shown to be occupying the defenses facing us on our right flank. The disposition of enemy troops at this time was vague. In the DULMEN area, East of COLOGNE, auxiliary police units and Army security troops were reported to be tied in with the tactical troops defending the industrial area. Identifications as far to the North showed the probability of the presence of the 336th Infantry Division and elements of the 176th Infantry Division. In the central part of the 82d Airborne Division front identifications had been made of the 12th Volksgrenadier Division, but it was believed only one regiment of the Division remained in this area.

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After two nights of successful patrolling, daylight observations and interrogations of prisoners on our part, the following facts were established: Elements of the 3d Parachute Division, comprising the 8th Parachute Regiment on the right and the 5th Parachute Regiment on the left, were defending the East bank of the river from FORZ to the South, to include the defenses of the SIEG river from the North. The 2d Company and 3d Company of the 8th Parachute Regt were identified opposite the COLOGNE-FORZ sector. Later identifications placed the 5th Parachute Assault Company in the vicinity of LULSDORF (475480). To the North in the vicinity of LEVERKUSEN, prisoners from 6th Company identified the 1220th Regiment of the 176th Infantry Division on the night of April 4-5. However, identification of 176th Division's 1218th and 1219th Grenadier Regiments in the vicinity of WIRBURG, outside of the pocket, made the presence of the entire 1220th Regiment in our sector questionable.

North of FORZ, to include MUELHEIM, there were numerous flak batteries and miscellaneous Volksturm and supply troops. Identifications were made of the 419th Flak Battalion and the 314th Mixed Flak Battalion. From MUELHEIM to the North across the Division's front, it was established by a successful Company raid by the 504th Parachute Infantry that the 330th Grenadier Regiment defended the river in the vicinity of HITDORF. Forty prisoners were captured from the Regiment's 5th Company and 13 were taken from the 8th Company. Later the capture of additional prisoners, ten in number, proved the presence of the 8th company in support of the 5th, 6th and 7th Companies of this Regiment and placed the entire 2d Battalion, 330th Regiment in the Northern part of the 82d Airborne Division sector and the Southern part of the 101st Airborne Division sector. Elements of the 13th Infantry Howitzer Company of the 330th Regiment were believed to have supported the 2d Battalion, 330th Regiment.

The enemy's first line of defense in the Division sector was the RHINE River, and he immediately availed himself of it by blowing all bridges. Following a familiar pattern, the villages along the East bank from MUELHEIM in the north to MONDORF in the South became the strong points of his defensive line, with particularly heavy concentrations of men and weapons in HITDORF, LEVERKUSEN, STAMMHEIM, WESTHOVEN, ZUNDORF, LANGEL, VIEDERKASSEL and RHEIDT. Machine guns formed the backbone of his defenses, reinforced by light AA in a ground role. The use of flak guns was particularly noticeable in the Northern part of the sector, and searchlights were often brought into play at night, making patrol crossings difficult.

A few self-propelled guns and tanks were drawn into the HITDORF area about 7 April, following a threatened bridgehead executed as a company raid of Company A, 504th Parachute Infantry. The enemy reacted violently through the use of his local reserves to contain our effort.

Announcement followed over a German radio station that night that "the 82d Airborne Division had established a bridgehead, strength of one battalion, but efforts to expand it were repulsed and the enemy were thrown back".

Trenches, weapons pits, and minefields in the most inviting beach areas, together with wire at some points made up the bulk of the enemy's defensive system. Many of the emplacements were located almost at the water's edge and were occupied only at night. Artillery was concentrated mainly at the Northern end of the sector. Except for a few heavy concentrations, artillery fire ordinarily was light and of a harassing nature.

SECTION IV -- SUPPLY

Movement of troops from base camps to the COLOGNE area during the first week of April was completed successfully despite difficulties caused by the distance of the railhead at STOLBERG from final assembly areas, changing location of the railhead, advancing the closing dates for troops to close in new areas, and the mechanical difficulties of current continental rail movements.

As the Division was in a static situation, there were no great problems of supply or evacuation. The Medical Company was fortunate in being able to occupy part of a large civilian hospital building.

During the military government phase of the period spent in the COLOGNE area

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the A.J. of S., G-4, was responsible for the supervising the vast quantities of lost and abandoned American and enemy equipment and supplies in the area. Salvage dumps for the collection of such materiel were established in different sections of the Division's area. It was impossible to make a complete inventory of the items collected in the time the Division spent in the COLOGNE area, but among them were 31 German trucks, 156 guns of various calibers, one complete German searchlight battery, one trainload of assault boats, 32 tanks, 46 other armored vehicles, seven nebelwerfers, and 2,500 tons of ammunition.

V -- SIGNAL

While at base camps prior to operations in April, signal equipment had been overhauled, shortages had been filled wherever possible, and a limited amount of training was held. The Division Signal Officer conducted a series of tests to determine the status of signal training of the various units and found that the outstanding delinquencies were that units had allowed their CV radio operators to become "stale". The Division Signal Company had not received personnel and equipment to fill its new Tables of Organization and Equipment.

Despite the fact that the advance echelon of the Signal Company was found to be too small for the work load initially in the COLOGNE area, exchange of telephone circuits from the 86th Infantry Division was relatively simple as our units took up the same Command Post locations as units of the relieved Division. This was not the case, however, in respect to the Division Artillery units, which found it necessary to employ approximately 100 miles of additional wire.

VI -- MILITARY GOVERNMENT

Military government resources were employed to the full during a major portion of the month as the Division's mission was occupational as well as tactical. Military government duties in the COLOGNE area were taken over from the 86th Infantry Division at 050730 April, and on 060900 April the Division Commander appointed Col. W. M. GRIFFITH, Division Artillery executive, to carry out the military government phase while the Division also was engaged in a tactical role.

Contacts were made with all Military Government Detachments in the area. The situation was reviewed and policies of the Division explained to the detachments.

The 82d Airborne Division assumed responsibility on 8 April 1945 for three Displaced Persons Camps, one at BRAUNWEILER for "Westerners", one at OSSENDORF for Russians, and one at ETZEL for Polish Nationals. A field grade officer was appointed at each camp as camp supervisor and furnished three officers and up to five enlisted men as a staff.

The condition of the camps was particularly bad when the Division assumed control. Within a week conditions of poor sanitation and lack of coordinated administration was rectified as far as possible. A maximum of 25,000 Displaced Persons were cared for during the course of any one day, although the transitory situation of the BRAUNWEILER Camp precluded an exact or accurate count. The camps were located in former Luftwaffe or Wehrmacht barracks areas.

Proclamations, ordinances and enactments of Military Government were posted in every Stadtkreis and Gemeinde in the entire Division area. The number of violations of the ordinances was not large and the Military Government Courts, established in COLOGNE, tried all cases. Most of the violations were of a minor nature such as violations of restrictions, travel, curfew and the like. There were a few cases of looting and sabotage, however, and the offenders received sentences up to 15 years of imprisonment.

The former Gestapo prison, KLINGELPUTZ, was used in carrying out all sentences of confinement.

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Duties of Military Government carried out by the 82d Airborne Division in the COLOGNE area included the following:

- Search and seizure.
- Check of every individual in the Division area.
- Collection of Wehrmacht weapons, ammunition and articles of war.
- Apprehension of Wehrmacht deserters and other Army personnel.
- Apprehension of Nazi officials and War Criminals.
- Enforcement of laws and ordinances and general supervision of the German administration.

VII -- CASUALTIES

1. Casualties within the Division and within Company A, 504th Parachute Infantry, during the period 3-17 April 1945 were as follows:

	<u>Division Total</u>		<u>Company A, 504</u>	
	<u>0</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>EM</u>
Killed in Action	2	11	1	5
Wounded or Injured in Action	5	102	1	13
Missing in Action	9	94	1	25

2. Casualties within the Division during the entire action on the Rhine River, including the period of Military Government, were as follows:

	<u>0</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>Total</u>
Killed in Action	3	20	23
Wounded or Injured in Action	5	109	114
Missing in Action	9	94	103
Total	17	223	240

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82D AIRBORNE DIVISION
ACTION IN CENTRAL EUROPE
APRIL - MAY 1945

PART TWO
ACTION EAST OF THE ELBE RIVER

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NOTE: See Part Three for charts accompanying Part Two.

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I -- NARRATIVE

Speed and boldness were the requisites in the General Allied Military picture when the 82d Airborne Division began arriving at the ELBE River, and it was decided to force a crossing of the river during the night of April 29-30. Only one regiment, the 505th Parachute, had arrived at the time.

Patrols from the Division Reconnaissance Platoon and 8th U.S. Infantry Division probed enemy defenses East of the river the night of 28-29 April, and the 505th forced a crossing the following night. Rain and snow kept the enemy in his fox holes, and opposition to the crossing was moderate except for heavy artillery fire.

By nightfall, April 30, 1945, the 82d Airborne Division had established a small bridgehead East of the ELBE River in the vicinity of BLECKEDE, GERMANY. This bridgehead had been established by the 505th Parachute Infantry in a splendid example of coordination and river crossing technique by a veteran regiment.

During the night of April 30-May 1, the plan was to build up sufficient forces from the 504th Parachute Infantry, which was arriving by train approximately five hours from the Elbe River, so as to attack out of the bridgehead with that regiment by daylight. One battalion of this regiment arrived at the bridgehead by 0430 hours and with a full appreciation of the value of time it jumped off at 0500 hours, the regiment being reinforced during the day by the later arrival of its other battalions. Troops completing the 4 - 6 day train trip from the Cologne area were immediately entrucked and taken into the bridgehead. Then, after being briefed and issued ammunition, they were committed to the attack. It was obvious that the German was disintegrating rapidly and it was of the utmost importance that regardless of the physical condition of our troops, the momentum of our drive be maintained until the enemy was completely destroyed or overrun.

With characteristic speed and courage, the 504th Parachute Infantry arrived at its objective by mid-morning and shortly after noon had reached the Forst Correnzien. On its left the 505th Parachute Infantry, despite the fact that it had been constantly moving for almost a week, drove ahead and reached its objective the Forst Correnzien, by mid-afternoon of May 1. Speed was the keynote, and the pressure was kept on the enemy during the night of May 1-2. The Division Reconnaissance Platoon seized the very important bridges at Suckau and Rosien and held them until relieved by advancing forces the following morning. Reconnaissance was pushed eastward by all units, the 504 engaging its armor with some enemy in the Forst Leussow at approximately 2100 hours, May 1.

The 325th Glider Infantry had been brought up during the night of May 1-2, briefed and prepared for commitment. With the 504th it jumped off before daylight after a short night of reorganizing and preparation, and advanced with the mission of seizing the line Ludwigslust-Doenitz, some 25 miles distant. Sufficient tanks and trucks were made available to the 504 to motorize a battalion. Combat Command "B", of the 7th Armored Division, was to be used with the 325 after the initial breakthrough and the seizure of Lubtheen. The troops had been driving hard for some time and all the units were going to the maximum of their ability. The German resistance in spots was intense and bitter, costly in lives. In other places none existed.

Overall, it appeared that our plan of attack was justified. The developments of May 2 confirmed this, although in the form they took they were surprising. Jumping off at 0500 hours, May 2, all units moved ahead aggressively. Resistance was spotty to negligible. By mid-morning units arriving generally east of Forst Leussow found themselves overrunning groups of bewildered enemy with hardly any will to resist, who thought that we were still at the Elbe while they were fighting what appeared to be a retrograde action with the Russians. By noon Combat Command "B" and the 325 had captured Ludwigslust and the 504 had captured Doenitz. Both units immediately moved to gain contact at Eldena.

Many units of the German 21st Army were being cut off and surrounded. The hospitals and rear installations of the 21st German Army were apparently endeavoring to continue functioning. Many German service units, hindered by thousands of

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refugees, found themselves within our positions. With very few exceptions they surrendered without resistance. For the division after more than two years of intense and, at times, very costly fighting with the German Army, the spectacle that began to unfold itself was an unbelievable one. German command and control became completely paralyzed and entire units were being captured intact.

By late afternoon a group of staff officers of the German 21st Army, representing Lt. Gen. Toppelkirch, commanding that army, arrived at the 82d Airborne Division's CP at Ludwigslust and endeavored to arrange the surrender of their casualties, allied prisoners, and some service units. Since these had already been captured, the offer was ridiculous on its face, and they were told so. They were further told that the attack would be continued and their army would be destroyed when we gained contact with our advancing Russian allies. At this time the Russian forces were approximately 10-20 miles to the east.

They then offered, in the name of the commander of the German 21st Army, the surrender of that army to our forces, but not to the Russians. They were told that this too was impossible, that since the Russians were our Allies they would surrender unconditionally to both of us, and they were again told that there was to be no delay since we were continuing the attack with the purpose of destroying their army. The staff departed stating that they would transmit this information to General Toppelkirch. During the late afternoon and early evening German units continued to be overrun. Many came into our lines to surrender. There appeared to be no control of the German forces within their own ranks, except in small formations.

At about 2100 hours Lt. General Toppelkirch arrived at the CP in Ludwigslust and after some discussion unconditionally surrendered his army to the 82d Airborne Division. He too desired to stipulate that his army would surrender on the ground where it was and that upon cessation of hostilities this division would accept his troops as their prisoners. This was rejected and he was told that his army would be destroyed by ours in conjunction with our Russian allies and that his unconditional surrender would be valid when his troops were physically within our lines and not until then. An added paragraph stipulating this was added to the unconditional surrender, which was signed at about 2200 hours.

This ended for this division approximately two years of very hard and costly combat, combat in which many lessons were learned, lessons that were applied and paid handsome dividends in the closing days of the fighting. The combat discipline of the units of the division, their appreciation of the need to drive ahead, and their willingness to drive ahead, regardless of their physical condition, particularly in the infantry regiments, was never more apparent. Once his initial covering forces along the Elbe River were overrun, the German was never given an opportunity to offer an organized defense, and the lives saved and complete victory achieved were far beyond any measure of value in terms of sweat and labor.

Combat Com and "B", under the command of Colonel Hackell, participated brilliantly in the final day of the attack. Throughout the entire three-day attack, the division was very ably supported by Squadron "A" of the 4th Royals which provided 25 "Buffaloes" to assist in the crossing at Blockede.

II -- CHRONOLOGY

The Division was alerted on 23 April for possible movement and later received orders to move by rail and motor to the ELBE River Northeast of HANNOVER, GERMANY, where it was to operate under XVIII Corps (Airborne). The Corps was to be attached tactically to the British Second Army and administratively to the Ninth United States Army.

On 251200 April the 82d Airborne Division was relieved in the COLOGNE area by the 417th Field Artillery Group and began movement to UELZEN area on 26 April.

26 - 28 April: Major elements of the Division were enroute by rail and motor to the new area. The railhead was established at LEHRTE (X5222) and the truckhead at MEYHAUSEN. In overnight staging area for the truck movement was

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established at WIEDENBRUCK. The Division Command Post opened at HOHENZETHEN (Y0799) at 271200 April.

Operations Instructions No. 6, issued 28 April, provided that the 505th Parachute Infantry and 13th Infantry (8th U. S. Infantry Division), attached, would relieve elements of the 5th British Division along the ELBE River. The 505th also would attack across the ELBE River and seize a limited bridgehead.

29 April: The 505th Parachute Infantry closed at 1700, but elements of the Regiments effected relief of the 13th Brigade, 5th British Division, by 1315 hours. The 13th Infantry had relieved the 17th Brigade, 5th British Division, at 0200 hours.

Three patrols from the Division Reconnaissance Platoon, each patrol made up of one officer and eight enlisted men, and one patrol from the 13th Infantry crossed to the North bank of the ELBE River during the night of 28 - 29 April. Three patrols met little opposition, but one patrol from Division Reconnaissance Platoon encountered stiff resistance when it landed on the North bank. One officer and five enlisted men were missing.

The Division Command Post moved from HOHENZETHEN to BLECKEDE at 1000 hours.

30 April: The 505th Parachute Infantry forced crossings of the ELBE River at four points and established a limited bridgehead along the general line 053253 - 058305 - 056322 - 005315. Resistance was moderate and this permitted construction of a class 36 bridge by Corps Engineers which was completed by 2000 hours at 004268. Crossings were made in "Buffaloes" of the British 4th Royals, by assault and stern boats, manned by the 307th Airborne Engineers.

The 504th Parachute Infantry had not closed completely, but the 2d Battalion was preparing to cross the ELBE as the day ended. The 13th Infantry, less 3d Battalion, was relieved from attachment to the Division. The 121st Infantry (8th Infantry Division) was attached at 1900 with other components of its combat team, and, with the 3d Battalion of the 13th, was in the process of relieving 2d Battalion, 505th, as the period and month closed.

Other major elements of the Division, including the 325th Glider Infantry were still enroute. Motor elements of organic artillery fired 13 missions, 221 rounds, and attached artillery fired 92 missions, 1,852 rounds.

A total of 588 prisoners were received at the Division Prisoner of War cage during the day, bringing the total for the ELBE River area to 606.

1 May: The attack moved from right to left, the 504th Parachute Infantry jumping off at 0500, the 505th at 0552 and the 121st (Reinforced) at 0600. The attack gained up to nine miles in an easterly direction against light opposition, and the Division front at the end of the day was along the general line SUCKAU - 160278-150240-STIFEL-ZEITZ-PRIVELACK. The Division Reconnaissance Platoon captured ROSIEN (1527) and kept contact with the British 6th Airborne Division at 013356 at 0630 hours, the 121st Perimeteral Combat Team (Reinforced) was relieved from attachment to the 82d and reverted to control of the 8th Infantry Division.

The Division Command Post moved from BLECKEDE to NEUHAUS (1325). By the close of the day all remaining elements of the Division had detrained and were enroute to forward assembly areas. Corps engineers completed a bridge at DARCHAU (112203) by 1830 hours, and 82d Airborne Division traffic was diverted to that bridge. Artillery fired 20 missions, 1,128 rounds during the day. A total of 696 prisoners were counted during the period.

Operations Instructions No. 9, issued during the day, provided that the attack continue on 2 May with the 325th Glider Infantry passing through the 505th Parachute Infantry. Combat Command "B", attached from the 7th Armored Division, was to prepare for offensive action in the 325th Sector.

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2 May: The attack was continued at 0500, and both the 325th Glider Infantry and 504th Parachute Infantry reached initial objectives by 0815. With 2d Bn., 325th, attached, Combat Command "B" (Task Force HASKELL) attacked at 1000 along the main road toward LUDWIGSLUST (5132) and seized the city by 1210. The Division Reconnaissance Platoon suffered some casualties but succeeded in clearing the RAMM, QUAST and LEUSSOW Forest areas of enemy. The Division established a general line along the NEUE ELDE Canal North to 500370 and prepared to link up with Russian forces as contemplated in Operations Instructions No. 10, issued 020830 May. The Division Forward Command Post moved to LUDWIGSLUST.

The Commanding General, 82d Airborne Division, accepted the unconditional surrender of the Twenty-First German Army at 2130 from Lt. Gen. Von TIPPELSKIRCH. The surrender terms were signed at LUDWIGSLUST. (See Annex No. 3).

A total of 1,420 prisoners were counted during the day, but the mass movement of the German Twenty-First Army through the lines had begun before the period ended. Because of the rapid advance, few artillery rounds were fired during the day. The remainder of the organic artillery closed with the forward elements by the end of the day.

The task of handling the large numbers of prisoners and of displaced persons began with establishment of the DELIEN and ZEETZE Camps under control of 505th Parachute Infantry as outlined in Operations Instruction No. 11 issued at 02240 hours.

3 May: Firm contact with advancing Russian forces was made during the day. First contacts were made by Troop B, 87th Cavalry Squadron, attached, with the 191st Russian Infantry Division at REPPTIN (9946) at 0925 and by the 82d Abn Div Reconnaissance Platoon with the 8th Brigade of the 8th Russian Mechanized Corps at GRABOW (5526) at 1025 hours. A conference was held late in the day between Commanding General 82d Airborne Division and General Firstovich, Commanding General 8th Mechanized Corps. The Division Command Post was consolidated at LUDWIGSLUST.

The Division's main activity during the day was the direction of prisoners and displaced persons to the rear. No count of prisoners taken was possible, but it was estimated that the surrendered German Twenty-First Army totalled approximately 144,000 men. (For brief discussion of the Twenty-First Army, see Section III, INTELLIGENCE PHASES, and for summary of captured material, see Section V, SUPPLY AND EVACUATION.) Operations Instructions No. 12 established the front line and a cleared area between the American and Russian Forces.

4-19 May: Operations Instructions No. 13, issued 4 May, divided the Division area into sectors of responsibility, and systematic searches of the area to "screen" all personnel were begun. Normal military governmental duties were carried out. A Division Memorandum dated 7 May provided for establishment of additional Displaced Persons Centers. (See Annex No. 6 for locations of Prisoner of War and Displaced Persons camps). These camps were closed one by one as their usefulness ended.

Minor changes were made in the Division front and the cleared area between the American and Russian lines through consultation of commanders concerned. These changes are reflected in Annexes Nos. 6 and 7.

Among events during the period were the following:

a. Public funeral services on 7 May in LUDWIGSLUST for 200 of the approximately 1,000 bodies found in a concentration camp near LUDWIGSLUST. German civilians performed the necessary labor, and citizens of the city were ordered to attend the services which were held by American army chaplains. (See Annex No. 4).

b. Formal meeting at 82d Airborne Division Headquarters on 7 May of General DEMPSEY, commander of the British Second Army and General GRESHIN, Commander of the Russian Forty-Ninth Army.

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c. A formal exchange of visits at American and Russian Headquarters, including dinners at the 82d Airborne Division Headquarters on 17 May for the Commanding General of the Russian Fifth Guards Cossack Division and his staff and on 18 May for the Commanding General of the Russian 385th Infantry Division and his staff.

19 May-011200 June: The 82d Airborne Division relieved the 8th Infantry and 7th Armored Divisions of part of their occupational areas late on 19 May. Operations Instructions No. 14, issued 10 May, divided the divisional area into new sectors of unit responsibility. The changes involved some movement of unit Command Posts.

During this period the Division Commander presented Legions of Merit and Bronze Stars to a number of Russian officers and enlisted men, and Russian commanders presented Soviet decorations to several 82d Airborne Division officers and men. The Division's first quota of personnel to be redeployed to the United States left for base camp during May, and a second quota left the Division on 1 June.

Evacuation of prisoners of war remaining in the Division's stockade began on 27 May. Approximately 22,000 were evacuated daily by train and truck to British Second Army prisoner of war enclosures during a four-day period 27-30 May, after which slightly more than 4,000 prisoners remained in the Division enclosures.

The 82d Airborne Division was alerted late in the month for movement back to its base areas near RHEIMS, FRANCE. Advance parties were sent out, and movement of the Division's main body began by rail and truck on 1 June. The 82d Airborne Division was relieved of responsibility for its area by the 5th British Division at 011200 June 1945.

III INTELLIGENCE

When the 82d Airborne Division moved up to the ELBE River in the vicinity BLECKEDE, British troops already had located the II Naval Battalion, the I Police Battalion and the CELLE School Troops, a unit of battalion size. Known to be in the area but unlocated was Battle Group RERIK, which was believed to be composed of Regiments WUSCHNER and JANTZEN. Subsequent patrols by the Division Reconnaissance Platoon confirmed the presence of the Police Battalion and the CELLE School Troops.

The whole enemy order of battle in the area became crystal clear as our attack across the ELBE River began on 30 April. Large numbers of talkative prisoners swarmed into the prisoner of war cage and from their statements the jigsaw puzzle of regiment and battle group became sorted and the following picture resulted:

Battle Group RERIK had been reshuffled and bobbed up now as Brigade WALTERS consisting of Regiments WUSCHNER and BAUER, with a brigade of artillery, JANTZEN, attached. The latter was armed only with flak guns. The German habit of renaming already existing groups appeared when Regiment WUSCHNER resolved itself into the II Naval Battalion operating as Battle Group KLOSE and the I Police Battalion masquerading as Battle Group AHRENS.

Among units identified on 1 May was Regiment Bauer, composed of Battle Groups KRUSE and KLEVE, and the 1020th Landeschutzen Battalion.

As the advance progressed, rear elements of the Twenty-First Army were encountered and overpowered, identifications including the 5th Jaeger Division, the 4th SS Panzer Grenadier Division "Polizei" and the 606th Infantry Division. Enemy units were inclined to offer little resistance to our advance, and the end was reached with the surrender of the entire Twenty-First Army by Lieutenant General van TIPPELSKIRCH at 2130 hours 2 May 1945 at LUDWIGSLUST, GERMANY, 95 miles North-west of BERLIN, to Major General James M. GAVIN, commander of the 82d Airborne Division.

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Troops surrendered by the Twenty-First Army represented an almost inseparable conglomeration of over 2,000 different units. The Army formerly had been the Fourth and was made up of remnants of the Ninth and Twelfth German Armies. The main units included the 5th Jaeger Division, the 4th SS Panzergrenadier Division "Polizei", SS Battle Group Solar, and the 606th Infantry Division, all making up the III Panzer Corps. Also surrendered were elements of XVII Corps Oder consisting of a Parachute Division, the 1st Naval Division, and SS Division LANGEMARK.

In and around these units was a heterogeneous mass of station complements, supply troops, cadres, naval personnel, and a large number of units that may be classified only under the heading of "miscellaneous".

Interesting enough, the commander of the Twenty-First Army and his ranking staff officers were poorly informed as to the total troops and units under his command. General TIPPELSKIRCH's estimate of 150,000 troops to be surrendered was reduced to 144,000 by 82d Airborne Division estimates.

Among the ranking officers who surrendered were the following:

- Lieutenant General von TIPPELSKIRCH, CG Twenty-First Army, and his staff.
- Brigadier General von BIEDERMANN, CG of a group of straggler and equipment collecting points.
- General Theodor PETSCH, CG Wehkreis IX (Kassel).
- Major General Rudolf SCHUBERT, Former CG of Wehkreis XVII (Vienna).
- Brigadier General Kurt KEYSER, CG of HAMBURG and CG of sector "Lower ELBE" as far as DOENITZ.
- Brigadier General Franz Joseph GROBENZ, CG of Wehrmacht Ordnungstruppen (PM) of Twelfth Army.
- Brigadier General ROSSKOFF, CG of 606th Infantry Division.
- Brigadier General Dr. CONRAD, JA, Twelfth Army.
- Brigadier General LUSCHNIG, CG of Engineers, Twenty-First Army.
- Brigadier General WAGNER, CG, Twenty-First Army Artillery.
- Colonel MULLER, Chief of Staff, 606th Infantry Division.
- Colonel von GARDECKER, CG of Division Z.B.V.

With the cessation of hostilities on the Division front, intelligence activities were concentrated on the problem of security. CIC and IPW teams concentrated on the task of "screening" prisoners of war, displaced persons and civilians, segregating SS personnel and investigating war criminals. The CIC and IPW teams were stationed at or near the different camps to facilitate these activities. A total of approximately 15,000 prisoners of war, displaced persons and civilians all told, were "screened".

Close liaison was maintained between intelligence teams and the Military Government detachment. The Nazi Party organization was eliminated in the area, and the higher party officials in each town were evacuated to the British Second Army for further investigation.

In each town within the Division area the police force was subject to special scrutiny. The Mayors of LUBTHEEN and NEUHAUS were removed. The Mayor of LUDWIGSLUST committed suicide.

There were no cases of subversive activities and no proved cases of sabotage. So-called "werewolf" activity was not in evidence.

IV -- PERSONNEL

Aside from the normal routine of G-1 activities, the G-1 Section was concerned primarily with the problems incident to the capture of many thousands of German prisoners of war, and the supervision of the evacuation of liberated Allied prisoners of war, and the evacuation of displaced Allied nationals.

A minimum estimate of the number of German prisoners of war who surrendered to the 82d Airborne Division has been set at 144,000, during the period subsequent to the crossing of the ELBE River and the rapid advance to a junction with the Russian forces between LUDWIGSLUST and GRABOW, Germany. The climatic disintegra-

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tion of German formations in the area of Division responsibility presented an unparalleled situation. The surrender of enemy units was so rapid that it was impossible to concentrate the defeated foe in Division Collecting Points without seriously depleting its outnumbered strength to provide sufficient men to control and process the tens of thousands of Germans.

Prisoners were disarmed and returned to the rear to the XVIII Corps (Airborne) PW Camp, vicinity of BEVENSON and HIMBURG, Germany on foot and in such German military vehicles as would run. During the first two days, these vehicles traversed the roads from LUDWIGSLUST to NEUHAUS over the pontoon bridge at BLEKLEDE and on to the Camp in an apparently endless stream, bumper to bumper, and loaded to overflowing with the bedraggled remnants of the German Army. The concentrations at the PW Collecting Point at HIMBURG were incredible. In single fields, more than 10,000 enemy soldiers stood shoulder to shoulder awaiting disposition. When traffic across the ELBE River was frozen and the areas of Division responsibility were finally delineated, tens of thousands of prisoners taken by the 82d were already in the area of the adjacent division to the west of the 82d Airborne Division. Those within the Division area were immediately segregated in numerous PW Camps and counted. The total on hand was found to be in excess of 44,000. This number was increased to exceed 69,000 when the 82d took over part of the area of the 8th Infantry Division.

These Camps were organized and operated by Divisional units. Evacuation was organized by the G-1 Section in liaison with 8th Corps (British), and commenced on 27 May with rail movements which were completed by 30 May. Arrangements for this grand-scale evacuation were effected by the G-1 Section.

More than 10,000 liberated Allied prisoners of war were processed through Division Collecting Points to American and British Army points at LUNEBERG, HILDESHEIM and HAGENOW.

More than 20,000 displaced nationals, both Eastern and Western, from co-belligerent and conquered countries, were processed through Division "DP" Camps. These persons were assembled by "freezing" all those who lacked transportation, and by arrangement with the Russians. In the Camps they were segregated by national groups, quartered, fed and de-loused. At the earliest opportunity, they were moved to various Second British Army Distribution Points at LUNEBERG, CELLE, HAGENOW, SOLINGEN or SALTAU, from which Centers they were dispatched toward their homelands.

The segregation and transfer of Displaced Persons within the Division area and from the Division area was accomplished with minimum use of Division transportation although often numbers in excess of 1500 were moved in a single day. G-1 maintained liaison with British-Russian Liaison Groups and Contact Points at SOWTERIN, NEUSTAT, and LUDWIGSLUST and GRABOW. All British transport conveying Russian nationals to the Russian lines was reported to G-1 with advice as to the number of lorries expected to return empty. "DP" camp commanders had their camps organized so that groups of any nationality could be assembled for movement on an hour's notice of availability of vehicles. The British would route their returning empties to any designated Camp, receive their loads and clearance papers to cross the ELBE, and move these people to designated Reception Centers. When the 82d Airborne relinquished control of the area to the 5th British Division, all Displaced persons were concentrated at TREBS. Of the 2,000 remaining, 1,800 were Italians no facilities having been arranged by higher headquarters for the evacuation of Italians.

The sudden and dramatic termination of the war was further emphasized by almost immediate implementation of the Army Readjustment and Redeployment program. Six officers and 344 enlisted men were selected from among those with high adjusted service rating scores. Although instructions did not require it, the Inspector General cooperated with G-1 to inspect records prior to departure on only 24 hour's notice. This initial group was moved from LUDWIGSLUST, Germany to Base Camps in the REIMS area by truck and then to the Reception Depot near LeHavre by train.

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A few days before the Division was scheduled to move from the LUDWIGSLUST area to Base, a second Readjustment and Redeployment quota of 2 officers and 295 enlisted men was received. Allotment was made to units in accord with their ratios of high ASR Scores to the Division total in the priority groups of scores. Units were given 48 hours in which to accomplish the processing of administrative records. The imminence of the move precluded allotment of trucks to move this personnel to Base, and the entire group was moved in three days by air. All details, from movement schedules to preparation of passenger manifests and the loading of the aircraft were supervised directly by officers of the G-1 Section.

Division casualties during operations in the ELBE River Sector were as follow:

	Officers	Enlisted Men	Totals
Killed in Action	11	20	21
Wounded or Injured in Action	3	119	122
Missing in Action	0	11	11
Totals:	4	150	154

V -- SUPPLY AND EVACUATION

Movement of the Division to the ELBE River in the BLECKEDE area also was handicapped by long motor shuttles to the railroads at each end of the journey and by railway mechanical difficulties.

During the first week of May, 1945, the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-4, and related agencies continued to support the Division during its tactical operations East of the ELBE River, those operations having commenced with a crossing of the river on 30 April. G-4 controlled traffic over the ELBE River Bridge at BLECKEDE during the first 72 hours after the crossing.

Following the surrender of German forces, troops of the 82d Airborne Division made a systematic, thorough search of the Division area, and all salvageable enemy equipment was collected in a number of dumps established throughout the section. This equipment consisted in the main of large numbers of assorted vehicles, vast stores of ammunition and innumerable minor items. All such equipment was inventoried carefully and completely repaired and later turned over to the British 5th Division which relieved the 82d.

Approximately 300 enemy vehicles were registered with G-4 and utilized by the troops in servicing the thousands of prisoners of war and displaced persons quartered within the Division area.

The task of rationing, billeting and moving prisoners of war and displaced persons within the area was largely a G-4 problem. Special rations were issued to the various nationalities of displaced persons, and special reduced rations were issued to prisoners of war.

At the close of the month G-4 was completing arrangements for moving the Division from the LUDWIGSLUST area back to its base camps in the SISCONE-LION area.

The following major items were among equipment and supplies collected in the Division salvage dumps:

Assorted trucks and passenger cars	1,911
Half-tracks	81
Tanks	11
Motorcycles	145
Flak Wagons	21
Artillery pieces, all calibers	35
Guns, 88 mm	11
Guns, AT, 37mm	65
Guns, AA	972

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Mortars, 60mm	17
Mortars, 81mm	402
Guns, Machine, MG34	537
Bazookas	49
Rifles	10,111
Artillery Ammunition	247,705 rds
Panzerfausts	16,081
Small Arms Ammunition	10,546,055 rds
Grenades, all types	16,266
Radios, transmitting	117
Radios, receiving	50
Generators	57
Wire	175 miles
Kitchens	7
Busses	7
Locomotives	15
Tractors	5
Detonators	3,000

NOTE: The above figures do not include a large number of vehicles and much equipment evacuated across the ELBE River and out of the Division area immediately after surrender of the German Twenty-First Army.

VI -- SIGNAL

The advanced echelon of the Signal Company reinforced for the move to the ELBE River found it necessary, due to tactical requirements, to install two complete command post installations and prepare a wire net for a river crossing, all within the space of a few days. The main body of the Signal Company did not arrive in the area until five hours before the River crossing operation began.

At the beginning of May it was felt that the axis of communication would be toward LEUSSOU or LOSSEN and wire teams began laying field wire in that direction but available open wire was surveyed when the Division Command Post was located at LUDWIGSLUST. It was found that by making a number of repairs the commercial overhead open wire could be used for the 25 mile Division main axis of communication.

A switchboard was left at NEUMAU and served the Division units in that area for the rest of the month. This installation was called the "Champion Switch" and later handled telephone calls to the two bridges over the ELBE River, "A" at DACHAU and "B" at BLECKEDE for which the Division was later responsible.

The commercial telephone exchange was rendered inoperative upon the Division's arrival at LUDWIGSLUST. A survey of the commercial telephone system in the area showed that the following underground cables existed:

One 98 pair cable to Berlin
(This cable went through a repeater station at Perelburg).

One 98 pair cable to Hamburg.
(This cable went through a repeater station at Vallahn).

One 8 pair cable to Valahn.

One 98 pair cable from the Railway Station in Ludwigslust to the Railway station at Hagenow.

In addition to the long underground cables, most of the towns in the immediate vicinity were served by overhead open wire. The LUDWIGSLUST local switchboard was Local Automatic and the trunks were served manually.

On the 16th of May, upon request of the Military Government, a few local phones for the town of LUDWIGSLUST were installed. Telephones were installed for doctors, dairies, food stores, fire stations, and the like at the time.

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Two pairs in the underground cable to Hamburg were used to connect Champion switchboard into the Hamburg local switchboard. HAMBURG was a large switching central, and this gave the Division an outlet into the main communication system of the Western Front.

In performing an occupational mission, the Division was again spread over an area much larger than its tables of equipment were able to handle. By repairing and utilizing commercial open wire and using commercial underground cable the normal division system was soon installed. A total of 375 miles of open wire was maintained to accomplish this.

Two telephone lines were put in to Headquarters of Soviet units, including line to the 121st Russian Corps and one to the 284th Russian Division.

XVIII Corps (Airborne) left the area on 22 May 1945, and the corps' communication responsibilities were transferred to the 82d Airborne Division. A Radio Link was established to the Ninth Army (US) and the Second Army (Br). Wire lines were established with the Ninth Army and the 8th Infantry Division. The British sent a radio team to the Division to enter the Second Army (Br) net, and the 82d also entered one of the Ninth Army Radio Command Nets.

VII -- MILITARY GOVERNMENT

On 1 May 1945, Military Government office was located in BLECKEDE, Kreis of LUNEBURG. On 1 May 1945, Military Government moved with the Division across the ELBE River, and at 031800 May was in LUDWIGSLUST, the objective of the Division. Here began a phase of Military Government which ran the rest of operations. Initially, Military Government was set up in LUDWIGSLUST and the entire area on a tactical basis. Law and order was the immediate need. This was attained by the appointment of 51 police to control the civilian disorder and uncertainty that prevailed.

The job that faced Military Government was an imposing one complicated by the presence of thousands of displaced persons and prisoners of war in the Division area. From this chaos developed organization, administration, law and order, and a semblance of economic normalcy within a period of ten days.

An early discovery of a concentration camp at WOBBELIN was made and prompt action was taken. Sick and under-nourished were moved to a newly established hospital in LUDWIGSLUST where they were given care, medical treatment, and proper nourishment. This Division Military Government Section initiated mass burials of the atrocity victims, holding ceremonies on 7 May 1945 in LUDWIGSLUST at an especially dedicated cemetery located on the grounds of the Duke of MECKLENBURG. Two hundred of these victims were buried, with services performed by American Army Chaplains of all religious faiths, and attended by the entire population of the community, General GAVIN and his staff, and all available military personnel.

During the month more than 60,000 "Western" displaced persons were started on their journey home, being processed through displaced persons camps established by the Division at TREBS, MALLISS, and the Luftwaffe Field in LUDWIGSLUST. As the month closed, there remained only 91 "Western" displaced persons in the entire Division area. The Military Government Section initiated arrangements with Russian forces for movement of Eastern German refugees back to their homes. Approximately 5,000 such refugees were moved through the Russian lines by mutual agreement with the Soviet forces.

All the essentials of Military Government were accomplished. These included establishment of law and order, removal and appointment of officials, re-establishment of the economic life in the area to include food rationing, labor, communication, public utilities, public welfare, and the establishment and operation of Military Government Courts supervising the civil administration and operation of more than 150 gemeinden.

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Initially, upon occupation, immediate surveys of captured enemy food and medical supplies were made, such supplies being frozen in warehouses established by the G-4 Section. Demands were made upon the communities for food stuffs, clothing, medical supplies, operation and administrative necessities for the operation and administration of camps for displaced persons. Bakeries were re-established and put into maximum production, necessitating procurement of labor, raw food stuffs, fuel, and power. The entire productive facilities were placed at the disposal of the DP camps. A survey of the electric power for the area indicated that the sources were in the hands of our Russian allies. Notwithstanding, separate sources of supply of power were developed, such supplies being rationed for essential military and civilian needs.

In the course of the month, "V-E" Day occurred and Military Government's transition from operation under SHAEF's directives from "prior to defeat and surrender" to "after defeat and surrender" was accomplished in a routine manner.

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82D AIRBORNE DIVISION
ACTION IN CENTRAL EUROPE

APRIL - MAY 1945

PART THREE

MISCELLANEOUS INFORMATION AND MAPS

I Miscellaneous Information:

1. Unit Commanders and Ranking Staff Officers.
2. Schedule of Attachments.
3. Surrender of the German Twenty-First Army.
4. Burial of Atrocity Victims.

II Maps:

1. Routes of March, Base Camps to Cologne Area, Cologne to Elbe River.
2. Rhine River Defense.
3. Military Government Areas in Cologne Sector.
4. Elbe River Crossing.
5. Operations 1-3 May 1945.
6. Military Occupation Area 3 - 19 May 1945.
7. Military Occupation Area 20 May - 1 June 1945.

Map No- 5
Missing

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UNIT COMMANDERS AND RANKING STAFF OFFICERS

Commanding General	Major Gen. JAMES M. GAVIN
Assistant Division Commander	Brig. Gen. IRA P. SWIFT
Division Artillery Commander	Brig. Gen. FRANCIS A. MARCH
Chief of Staff	Col. ROBERT H. WIENECKE
G-1	Lt. Col. ALFRED W. IRELAND
G-2	Lt. Col. WALTER W. WINTON, JR.
G-3	Lt. Col. JOHN NORTON
G-4	Lt. Col. ALBERT C. MARIN
Adjutant General	Lt. Col. MAURICE E. STUART
Chemical Officer	Lt. Col. JOHN P. GEIGER
Chaplain	Major GEORGE B. WOODS
Finance Officer	Lt. Col. WILLIAM E. JOHNSON
Headquarters Commandant	Capt. GEORGE J. CLAUSSEN
Inspector General	Capt. WILLIAM E. JONES
Judge Advocate General	Lt. Col. NICHOLAS E. ALLEN
Ordnance Officer	Lt. Col. MAYO S. SILVEY
Provost Marshal	Major FREDERICK G. MCCOLLUM
	Major PAUL E. VAUPEL (fr 23 May)
Quartermaster	Lt. Col. JOHN W. MOHRMAN
Signal Officer	Lt. Col. ROBERT E. FURMAN
Surgeon	Lt. Col. WILLIAM C. LINDSTROM
CO, 325 Glider Infantry	Col. CHARLES E. BILLINGSLEA
CO, 504 Parachute Infantry	Col. REUBEN H. TUCKER
CO, 505 Parachute Infantry	Col. WILLIAM E. EKMAN
Executive Officer, Division Artillery	Col. WILBUR M. GRIFFITH
CO, 319th Glider FA Battalion	Lt. Col. JAMES C. TODD
CO, 320th Glider FA Battalion	Lt. Col. PAUL E. WRIGHT
CO, 376th Parachute FA Battalion	Lt. Col. ROBERT W. NEPTUNE
CO, 456th Parachute FA Battalion	Lt. Col. WAGNER J. D'ALLESSIO
CO, 80th Airborne Anti-Aircraft Battalion	Lt. Col. RAYMOND E. SINGLETON
CO, 307th Airborne Engineer Battalion	Lt. Col. EDWIN A. BEDELL
CO, 82d Airborne Signal Company	Capt. RICHARD E. NERF
CO, 307th Airborne Medical Company	Major JERRY J. BELDEN
CO, 407th Airborne Quartermaster Company	Major SAMUEL M. MAYS
CO, 782d Airborne Ordnance Maintenance Co.	Capt. JEFF DAVIS, JR.
CO, 82d Parachute Maintenance Company	Capt. WYLER COOPER
CO, Division Headquarters Company	Capt. ROBERT B. PATTERSON
CO, Headquarters Battery, Division Artillery	Capt. TONY J. RABIL
CO, Special Troops	Major WILLIAM H. JOHNSON
CO, Division Reconnaissance Platoon	1st Lt. JOSEPH V. DIMASI
CO, Division Military Police Platoon	Major Frederick G. McCollum
	Major PAUL E. VAUPEL (Fr 23 May)

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SCHEDULE OF ATTACHMENTSCologne Phase

UNIT	DATE ATCHD	SUB-ATTACHMENTS (Organic Units)	DATE OF SUB A	DATE OF RELIEF SUB A	DATE OF RELIEF FROM DIV
307 Abn Engr Bn	---	Co A to 325 G.I. Co C to 504 P.I. Co B to 505 P.I.	4 Apr 4 Apr 4 Apr	141200 141200 132400	---
80 Abn AA Bn	---	Btry E to 325 Btrys C & D to 504 Btrys A & F to 505	4 Apr 4 Apr 4 Apr	141200 141200 141200	
3d Bn 325 G.I.	---	To Div Res. 81mm Mort Plat to 504	4 Apr 061945	17 Apr 071100	

319 G. FA Bn	--	To 320 G. FA Bn	170800	251200	---
376 P. FA Bn	---	To 504 P.I.	170800	242215	---
456 P. FA Bn	--	To 505 P.I.	170800	242215	---
80 Abn AA Bn	---	To 505 P.I.	220800	242215	---
		(Non-Organic Units)			
666 QM Trk Co	---				---
341 Inf	040829				042330
417 FA Gp	040829	General Support			161200
746 FA Bn (8" How)	040829	General Support	040829	141800	*
672 FA Bn (155 How)	040829	General Support			142400 **
541 FA Bn (155 Gun)	121745	General Support			161200
805 FA Bn (155 How)	040829	General Support			161200
546 FA Bn	110130	General Support			161200
790 FA Bn	102200	General Support			140330**
74 Cml Gen Co	041500	3d Sec to 504 1st Sec, 2 Sqds 4 Sec to 505 2d Sec, 2 Sqds 4 Sec to 325 2 Sqds 4 Sec to 504	4 Apr 6 Apr 6 Apr 6 Apr	141200 132400 141200 141200	210800

RESTRICTED

UNIT	DATE ATCHD	SUB-ATTACHMENTS	DATE OF SUB A	DATE OF RELIEF SUB A	DATE OF RELIEF FROM DIV
417 FA Gp		417 FA Gp	181200		251200
746 FA Bn		417 FA Gp			251200
74 FA Bn	181200	417 FA Gp			251200
541 FA Bn	181200	417 FA Gp			251200
12 TD Gp	181200	417 FA Gp	241200		251200
661 FA Bn	181200	12 TD Gp	181200	241200	251200
942 FA Bn	181200	12 TD Gp	181200	231200	251200
3d Co, 22 Belg. Fus. Bn	210800	661 FA Bn	210800		251200
294 FA Obs Bn	250600	For movement to new area			251800
1130 Combat Engr Bn	250600	For movement to new area			261900

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Elbe River Phase

(Organic)

80 Abn AA Bn		Btrys A, E, F to 505	291730	040815	--
		Btry C to 504	302300	040815	--
307 Abn Engr Bn		Co B to 505	290600	040815	--
		1 plat Co C to 504	302300	040815	--
2d Bn 325 G I		OCB 7 Armd Div	021000	022400	--

(Non-Organic)

666 QM Trk Co					--
280 FA Bn	27 Apr	Div Arty	27 Apr	170700	170700
580 AAA Bn	271930	Btrys B & D to 505	290600	300130	021000
	23 May	Div Arty	24 May	05 June	05 June
13 Inf (8 Div)	281200	Co H to 505	291830		302400
		3d Bn to Div Res	29 Apr	301900	
		3d Bn to 121 Inf	301900		011205
43 FA Bn	281200	13th Inf	281200	302300	
		121 Inf	302300		011205
605 TD Bn	281820	Co A to 505	012330	020830	151500
		Co B to 325	020830	040815	
		Co C to 504	020830	040815	
		Bn to 307 Engr	042300	151500	
4 Royals (Br) Sqdn A	291200	Direct Supt 505			021200
740 Tk Bn	291700	Co A to 505	302300	012100	012100
		Co C to 504	302300	012100	
		Co B to 121	302300	--	

RESTRICTED

UNIT	DATE ATCHD	SUB-ATT. COMMENTS	DATE OF SUB A	DATE OF RELIEF SUB A	DATE OF RELIEF FROM DIV
644 TD Bn	291700	1 plat, Co A to 504 1 plat, Co A to 505	302300 302300	012100 012100	012100
Co A, 89 cml Bn	291800	To 505 To 504	291800 302300	302300 090800	090800
121 Inf	301900				011205
56 FA Bn	301900	To 121 Inf	301900		011205
Co C, 89 Cml Bn	301900	To 121 Inf	301900		011205
CCB, 7 Armd Div	01 May	Co C, 814 TD Bn to 325 Co D, 31 Tk Bn to 504	02 May 02 May	031030 031830	041200
205 FA Gp	031200	To Div Arty	042300	170700	170700
207 FA Bn	031200	To Div Arty	042300	170700	170700
768 FA Bn	031200	To Div Arty	042300	170700	170700

* Reld fratchd 417 FA Gp 141800, converted to Special Guards, atchd to 82d Abn Div.

** Reld atchd 417 FA Gp as well as fr 82d Abn Div.

RESTRICTED

RECORD OF THE UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER OF THE GERMAN 21ST ARMY TO THE 82D

DIVISION, 022130 MAY 1945

HEADQUARTERS 82D AIRBORNE DIVISION
Office of the Division Commander

LUDWIGSLUST, GERMANY
2 May 1945

I, Lieutenant General von Tippelskirch, Commanding General of 21st German Army, hereby unconditionally surrender the 21st German Army, and all of its attachments, and equipment and appurtenances thereto, to the Commanding General of the 82d Airborne Division, United States Army. This unconditional capitulation is valid only for those troops of 21st Army which pass through the American lines.

LUDWIGSLUST, GERMANY
2 May 1945

Ich, General der Infanterie von Tippelskirch, kommandierender General der 21. deutschen Armee, übergebe hiermit bedingungslos die gesamte und deren Zubehör, an den kommandierenden General der 82. Fallschirmjäger Division, Vereinigte Staaten Armee. Diese bedingungslose Kapitulation gilt nur für diejenigen Truppen der 21. Armee welche die amerikanischen Linien passieren.

/s/ von Tippelskirch
von Tippelskirch
General der Infanterie

LUDWIGSLUST, GERMANY

Accepted.

/s/ James M. Gavin
JAMES M. GAVIN
Major General, U. S. Army

RESTRICTED

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BURIAL OF ATROCITY VICTIMS

Funeral services were held on the morning of 7 May at LUDWIGSLUST for 200 of the approximately 1,000 men whose bodies were found at a German concentration camp at WOBBELIN. German civilians of every social strata and occupation in LUDWIGSLUST removed the bodies from the concentration camp and prepared them for burial, dug the graves, and filled the graves after the services. The rites were attended by citizens of the city, a representative group of captured German army officers, and several hundred officers and men of the 82d Airborne Division. The following purpose of the services was read by Major (Chaplain) George Woods, Division Chaplain.

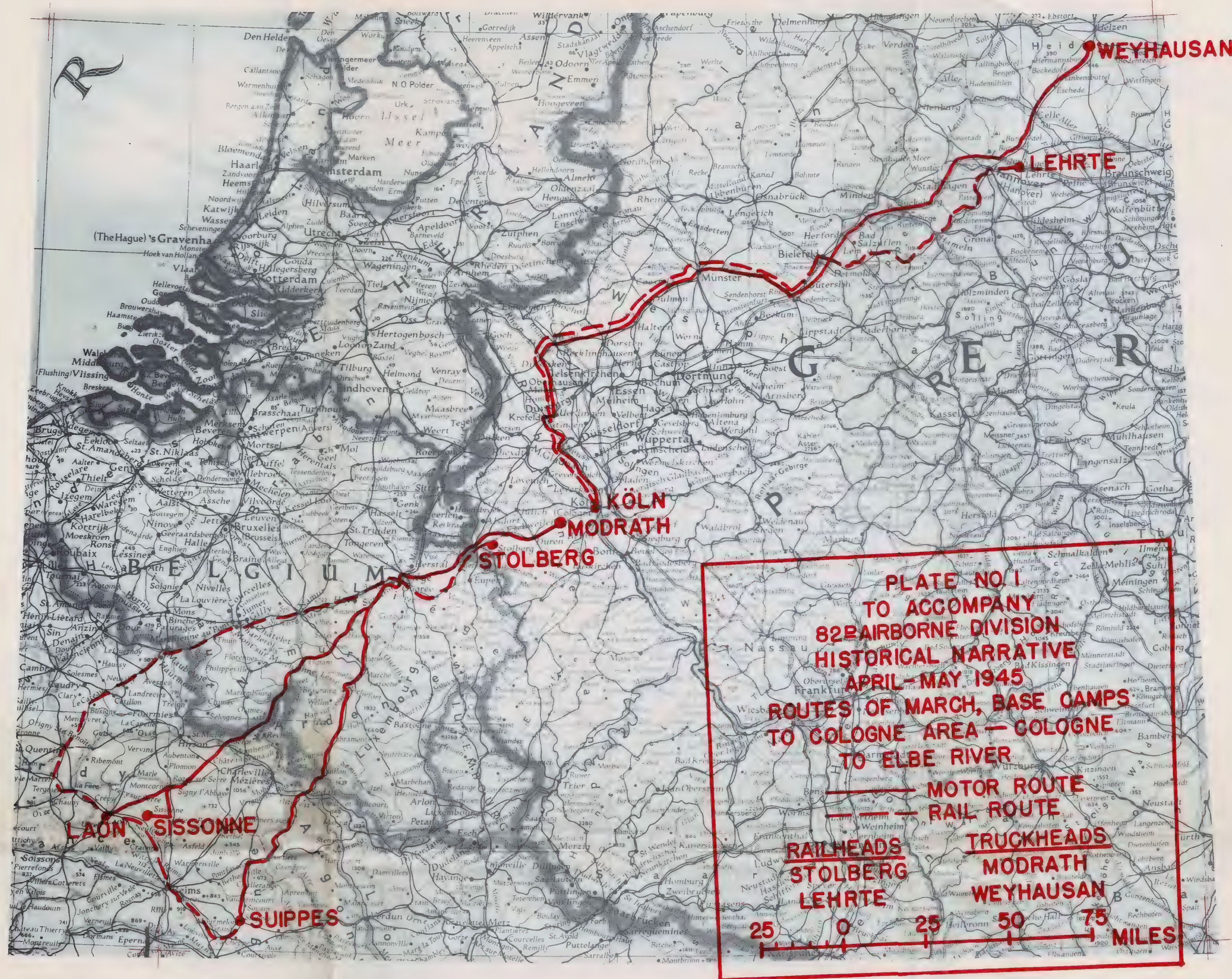
"We are assembled here today before God and in the sight of men to give a proper and decent burial to the victims of atrocities committed by armed forces in the name and by the order of the German Government. These 200 bodies were found by the American army in a concentration camp four miles north of the city of LUDWIGSLUST.

"The crimes here committed in the name of the German people and by their acquiescence were minor compared to those to be found in concentration camps elsewhere in Germany. Here there were no gas chambers, no crematoria; these men of Holland, Russia, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and France were simply allowed to starve to death. Within four miles of your comfortable homes 4,000 men were forced to live like animals, deprived even of the food you would give your dogs. In three weeks 1,000 of these men were starved to death; 800 of them were buried in pits in the nearby woods. These 200 who lie before us in these graves were found piled four and five feet high in one building and lying with the sick and dying in other buildings.

"The World has long been horrified at the crimes of the German nation; these crimes were never clearly brought to light until the armies of the United Nations overran Germany. This is not war as conducted by international rules of warfare. This is murder such as is not even known among savages.

"Though you claim no knowledge of these acts you are still individually and collectively responsible for these atrocities, for they were committed by a government elected to office by yourselves in 1933 and continued in office by your indifference to organized brutality. It should be the firm resolve of the German people that never again should any leader or party bring them to such moral degradation as is exhibited here.

"It is the custom of the United States Army through its Chaplain's Corps to insure a proper and decent burial to any deceased person whether he be civilian or soldier, friend or foe, according to religious preference. The Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces has ordered that all atrocity victims be buried in a public place, and that the cemetery be given the same personal care that is given to all military cemeteries. Crosses will be placed at the heads of the graves of Christians and Stars of David at the heads of the graves of Jews: a stone monument will be set up in memory of those deceased. Protestant, Catholic and Jewish prayers will be said by Chaplains Wood, Hannan and Wall of the 82d Airborne Division for these victims as we lay them to rest and commit them into the hands of our Heavenly Father in the hope that the world will not again be faced with such barbarity."





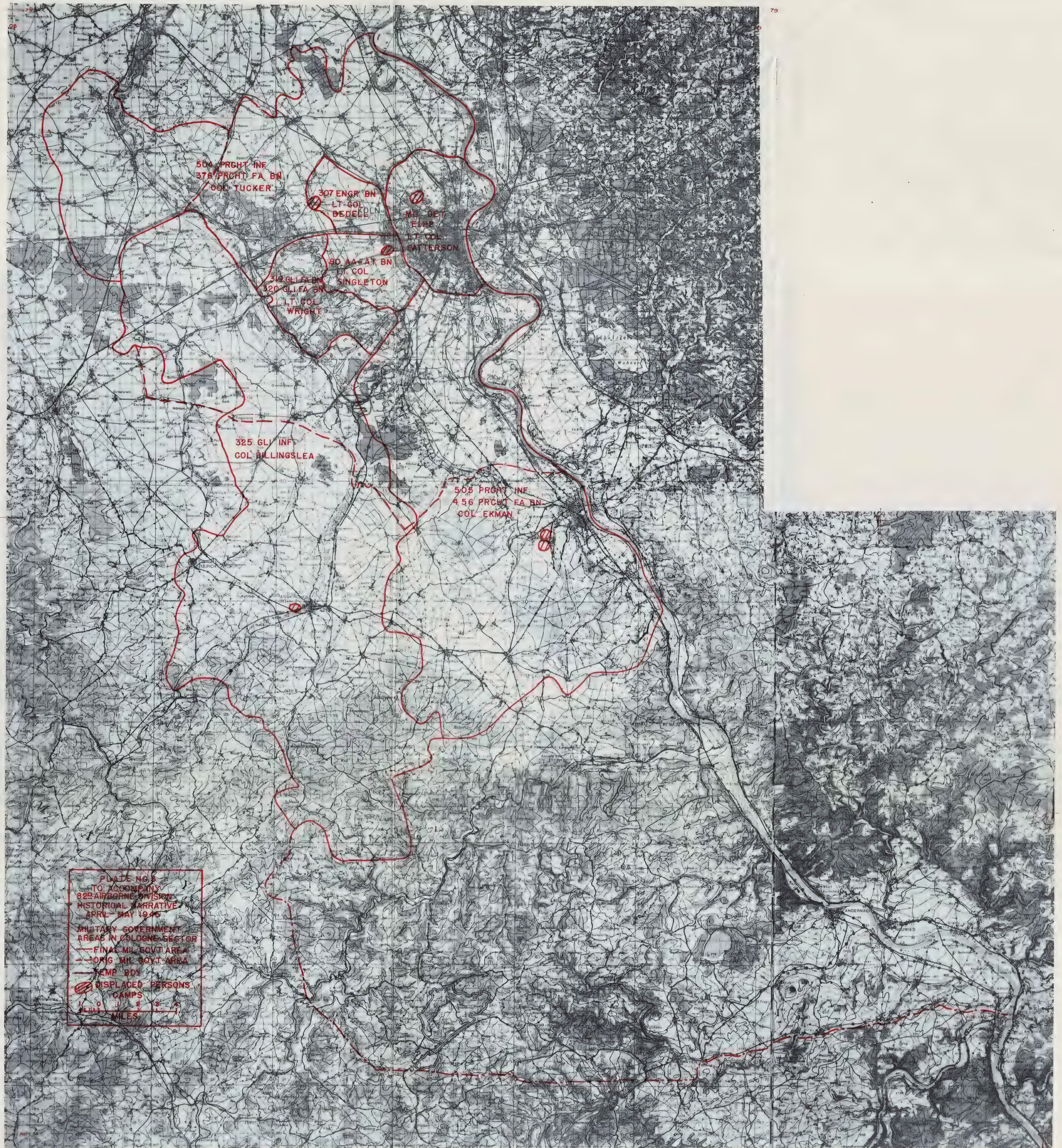


PLATE NO. 4
TO ACCOMPANY
82ND AIRBORNE DIVISION
HISTORICAL NARRATIVE
APRIL - MAY 1945
ELBE RIVER CROSSING &
BRIDGEHEAD ESTABLISHED
30 APRIL 1945
1000 500 0 500 1000
YARDS





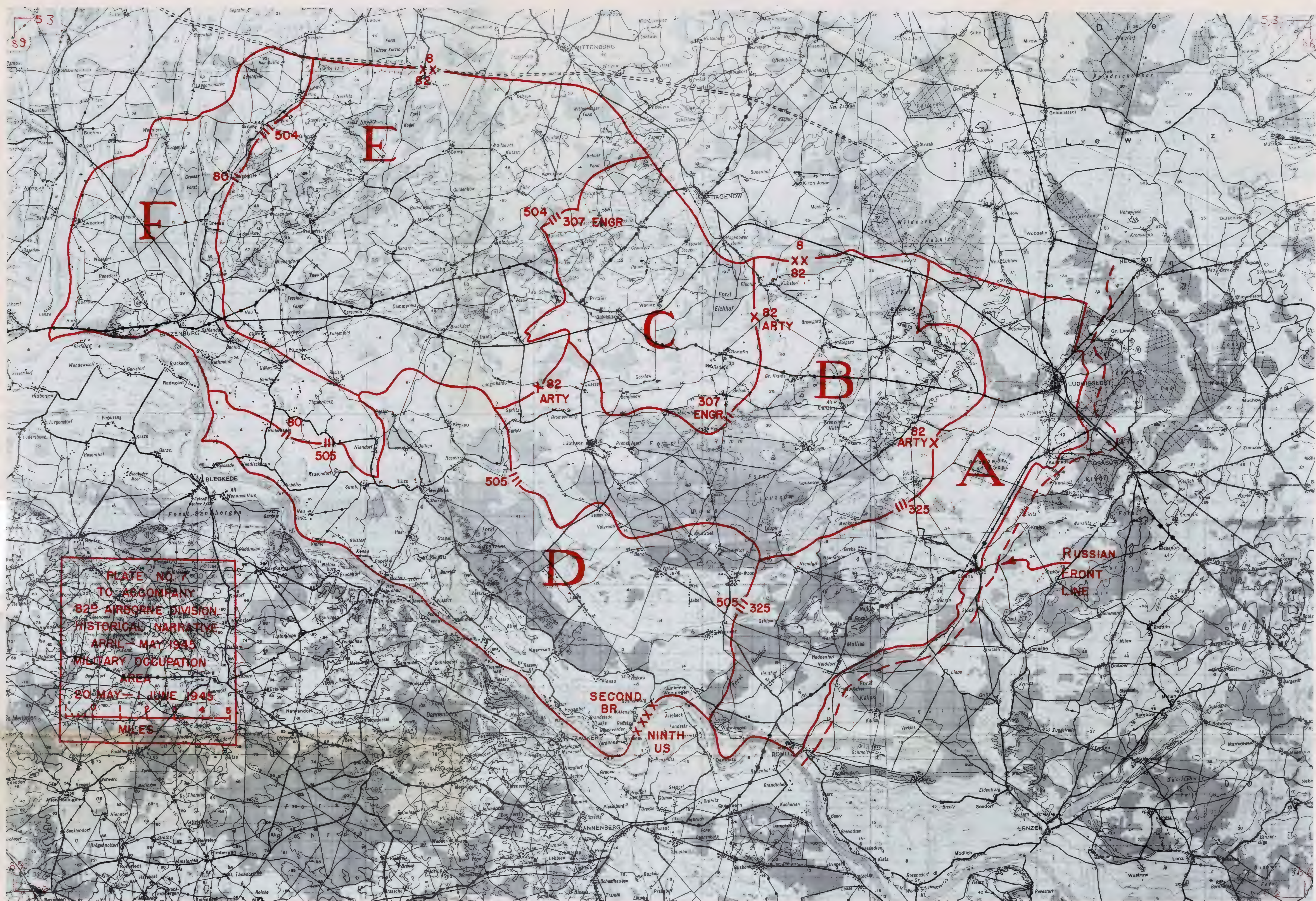


PLATE NO. 1
TO ACCOMPANY
825 AIRBORNE DIVISION
HISTORICAL NARRATIVE
APRIL - MAY 1945
MILITARY OCCUPATION
AREA
20 MAY - JUNE 1945
0 1 2 3 4 5
MILES

SECOND
BR
NINTH
US

RUSSIAN
FRONT
LINE

RESTRICTED

82D AIRBORNE DIVISION

ACTION IN CENTRAL EUROPE

PART FOUR

DISTRIBUTION

Airborne Headquarters

FAA	15
XVIII Corps (Abn)	15
11th Abn Div	2
13th Abn Div	2
17th Abn Div	2
101st Abn Div	2
1st Br Abn Corps	2
1st Br Abn Div	2
6th Br Abn Div	2
Prcht Sch	2
Abn Board	2

Higher Headquarters

USFET Fwd	3
USFET Rear	3
AC of S, G-2, OPD,	
WD GS	1
War Dept	3
21 AG (Br)	6

Adjacent Headquarters

8th Inf Div	1
7th Armd Div	1
CCB, 7th Armd Div	1
84th Inf Div	1
86th Inf Div	1
97th Inf Div	1
13th Armd Div	1
417th FA Gp	1
12th TD Gp	1
205th FA Gp	1
746th FA Bn	1
74th FA Bn	1
541st FA Bn	1
661st FA Bn	1
942d FA Bn	1
13th Inf	1
3d Co, 22 Belg Fus Bn	1
280th FA Bn	1
580th AAA Bn	1
43rd FA Bn	1
605th TD Bn	1
740th Tk Bn	1
Sqdn A, 4th Royals	1
644th TD Bn	1
121st Inf	1
56th FA Bn	1

Adjacent Headquarters (Cont'd)

207th FA Bn	1
768th FA Bn	1
Co A, 89th Cml Bn	1
Co C, 89th Cml Bn	1

Lower Headquarters

325th Gli Inf	50
504th Prcht Inf	50
505th Prcht Inf	50
Hq & Hq Btry, Div Arty	10
319th Gli FA Bn	15
320th Gli FA Bn	15
376th Prcht FA Bn	15
456th Prcht FA Bn	15
80th Abn AA Bn	15
307th Abn Engr Bn	15
407th Abn QM Co	5
307th Abn Med Co	5
782d Abn Ord Maint Co	5
82d Abn Sig Co	5
Div Hq Co	2
Sp Trs	2
82d Abn Prcht Maint Co	2
82d Abn Rcn Plat	2
82d Abn MP Plat	2
666th QM Trk Co	2

Offices Within Division

CG	1
Asst CG	1
C/S	1
G-1	1
G-2	1
G-3	1
G-4	1
AG File	1
Sp Trs O's Club	1
IG	1
Sig O	1
Chem O	1
Fin O	1
JA	1
Div Surg	1
Ord O	1
QM	1
SSO	1
Engr	1
PRO	1
Div Assn	2
Div Historian	2
Hq Comdt	1
MGO	1

RESTRICTED

Courtesy Copies

Gen. Marshall	1
Gen. Eisenhower	1
Field Marshal Montgomery	1
Gen. Bradley	1
Gen. Brereton	1
Gen. J.C.H. Lee	1
Gen. Ridgeway	1
Gen. Gavin	5
Gen. Parks	1
Gen. March	1
Gen. Swift	1
Gen. Thrasher (Oise)	1
Col. Tucker	1
Col. Egan	1
Col. Wienecko	1
Col. Billingslea	1
Supt. USMA	1
C & GS School	1
Inf School	1
Field O's with Div at time, One each	87 (est)

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Map No- 5
Missing.